1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Saramacca

Preface

THE pages that follow describe scenes in the lives of a Negro people living in isolation in the interior of Dutch Guiana, South America. These Negroes are the descendants of runaway slaves imported from Africa, who took refuge in the dense Guiana bush and established African villages along the rivers whose rapids are their fortifications. The end of the seventeenth century already found these Negroes in constantly growing numbers up the Suriname River, and before the middle of the next century they were sufficiently organized to make repeated raids on the plantations for guns and gunpowder, for machetes and women. Several campaigns were conducted against them, but eventually final treaties were concluded with the Dutch owners of the colony, which guaranteed them their freedom. Today when a Bush Negro drinks with a white man his toast is "Free!"

Three tribal groups go to make up this Bush Negro population. The Saramacca tribe, of whom we write, is found in the heart of the colony along the upper reaches of the Suriname River (called by the Bush Negroes the "Saramacca," and hence so named in this book), and farther south along the Gran Rio and the Pikien Rio. This tribe has had the least contact with outside influences, and it is the Saramacca language which differs most from that spoken by the Negroes of the coastal region. The second is the Awka tribe, found mainly along the Marowyne (Maroni) River, which forms the boundary between French and Dutch Guiana; there are in addition several Awka villages on the lower Suriname. The third tribe, the Boni,

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1:Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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Saramacca

PREFACE

101 619 is relatively small, and is localized in the interior of French Guiana, not far from the Dutch boundary. In any consideration of the Guiana Negroes, yet a fourth group must be kept in mind—that of the Negroes of the coastal region, who remained enslaved until their emancipation in 1865.

489 The country of the Saramacca people is reached from Paramaribo, the capital and port of the colony of Suriname (Dutch Guiana), by the weekly train which goes some ninety-five miles to Kabel, where the railway meets the river. From Kabel transportation into the far interior is by dugout canoe, owned and manned by Saramacca men.

133 The country above Kabel, which the Saramacca people call the "big bush," is jungle. Over the watershed lie the Amazon basin and the forests of northern Brazil. Once in this region, the traveler has no contact with European civilization, though he is still under the protection of the Dutch Government.

121 114 The picture which we draw of the Saramacca people is based upon two field trips to Dutch Guiana, undertaken in the summers of 1928 and 1929. During our second trip we traversed the entire stretch of the Saramacca country from below Kabel, where the Awka villages are located, to the last native habitation on the Pikien Rio, beyond which are some fields, then uninhabitated miles of wilderness to the Brazilian border.

The ethnological work conducted among the Saramacca tribe of Bush Negroes and the Negroes of the coastal region of Suriname represents a portion of an investigation into the physical and cultural characteristics of the Negroes of the New World. This research, which is still in progress, has included field work in the United States, in Dutch Guiana, and in Africa, and some comparative study in the islands of the Caribbean. It began in 1923 with an inquiry into Negro-white crossing in the United States.[1] As the work progressed it became evident that the problem

[1] For the results of this portion of the investigation, see M. J. Herskovits, "The American Negro, a Study in Racial Crossing" (1928); and "The Anthropometry of the American Negro" (1931).

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

glimpsed by me, seemed a problem worthy of being illuminated. Therefore in 1927 an expedition, under the auspices of Dr. Clark Wissler of the American Museum of Natural History, was undertaken with the financial aid of Mr. Myron I. Granger.

The short time allotted me during this expedition did not suffice for the gathering of much material on the history and culture of the Djukas; consequently in 1928 and 1930 further expeditions under the same auspices and also financed by Mr. Granger were organized. Djuka is a composite picture of these several journeys.

As to the origin of the name "Djuka" there has been no little doubt. Many claim that it is a derivation of *Ouca* which was the name of the plantation where a treaty of peace was signed between the Bush Negroes and the whites nearly two hundred years ago. Perhaps that is true, for "Djuka" formerly applied solely to Bush Negroes of the Aucaner Auca tribe and is still so used by many but through widespread usage has come to designate not only the Aucaners, but all the Bush Negroes, collectively speaking.

This work makes no attempt at being an ethnological or anthropological account in the scientific sense of the words. It is a narrative of personal observation among these Bush Negro tribes set down with such accuracy as is possible for one trained in another field of science. Its purpose is to further the understanding of these primitive people and to acknowledge their superiority in their own scene. Finally, this book has been inspired by sincere admiration of the

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IN NORTH-EASTERN South America, more precisely in the hinterland of Dutch Guiana, there is a unique civilization little known to the white men of this continent. We know much of the strange life of the Congo and of the fascinating customs peculiar to the inhabitants of the Malay jungles, for a number of explorers have brought from the Eastern tropics the interesting accounts of their experiences. But of the Surinam Bush Negro, Djuka, as he calls himself, who nearly two hundred years ago fought his way out of slavery, of the survival of his African customs in the jungles of South America, little has been told. 114 101

The flush tides of imperialism have passed over these people, leaving them practically unaltered and unknown, unique among the Negro peoples of the world. They still maintain the life of jungle dwellers of the immemorial past.

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1A [For caption, see category 116, p.204.--Analyst]

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

114 Today they are hunting game with the long bow. Tonight
101 their bodies will be contorted with the sinuous movements of African dances, to the dull thudding of the tomtom. The huts along the rivers of Surinam are like the huts beside the Congo, as they were in the days of Stanley and the early explorers. And in these huts, polygamously, the Bush Negroes live.

114 There is a vicious irony to that famous phrase which describes the backward peoples of the earth as "the white man's burden." The backward sections of the globe have been invaded for exploitation, and the exposure of the natives to civilization is invariably disastrous. In West Africa the process of civilizing the natives has in a single decade decimated many of the tribes. Exploitation has ravished them with disease and despair, the gifts of the white man to the sons of Ham. In strong contrast with this deplorable life along the Congo, the Bush Negroes of South America are a proud and hardy race, independent of the white man and usually contemptuous of him. They have come into contact with white civilization and survived. *They have fought the white man with his own weapons and defeated him, forcing him to sue for peace.* Transported to this hemisphere originally as slaves, they threw off their bondage and began life again in the New World. Slaves, they organized armies for conquest. Primitives, they were the first new people in the Western hemisphere to establish their independence.

They were enabled to do this by the wild and inaccessible jungle, the ancient abode of their ancestors. In the face of

2: Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Boni

tribe of the Bush Negroes which owes allegiance to the French. They have never forgiven the Dutch for their relentless pursuit back in the old rebel days. Several years ago the Dutch authorities made an effort to invite the Bonis back into Dutch territory; these overtures, however, were flatly refused.

The derivation of the word "Boni" makes for interesting speculation, and three theories have been advanced to explain it. The first is that the word is derived from the French phrase "Bon Negre" or "Good Negroes" which the colonists of French Guiana applied to the Boni blacks because they were comparatively quiet and peaceful. It is also possible that the tribe may have been named after their famous rebel leader Bonny, who took such a formidable and prominent part in the rebellions. Thirdly, it has been considered that the name was derived from the Bonny River of West Africa, for undoubtedly some of the slaves came from that area. Although *B-o-n-i* is the official Dutch spelling of the word, when the tribesmen refer to themselves the accent is placed on the second syllable, and phonetically the word should be spelled *B-o-n-e-e* and pronounced much the same as the word *Pawnee*, the tribe of American Indians in the western United States. The Granman of this tribe, Awensai, receives his annual stipend from the Governor of French Guiana at Cayenne.

The first village of the Boni, situated on the French side of the Marowyne River, is that of Apatoo nestling at the foot of the Armina falls. The entire French side of the river from

2: Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Paramacca

seven days aimlessly in the high bush, and then happened upon the putrid remains of a tapir which had been killed by a jaguar and which food, after they chased the vultures away, was what saved them from starvation. He said that now they call themselves Teegre Nengre (Tiger Negroes), for they believe the jaguar was ordained to save them. One day his grandmother showed him gold in a creek bed and she told him never to touch it for she had seen it make white men crazy. His grandmother was born in Dutch Guiana. She had never told him stories of Africa, but he had heard of it from the Catholic missionaries. He knew that the blacks had come from over the sea, but he had also heard that they were the original inhabitants of the jungle who had been killed off by the Indians, with the exception of a few roving bands who had joined the escaped slaves. (Slaves are known to have escaped as early as 1650 and may have formed bands, which may, in turn, have joined the Boni tribe, for the Boni today are called Aluku Nengre—Indian Negroes—by the Aucaner and Paramacca tribes.) We also heard that the term Aluku Nengre refers to Indians of the Rukuyana tribe, of which one of the women was taken by Awensai, Granman of the Boni, as one of his wives. The term seems to be used in a somewhat opprobrious way on this account.

Old Captain Koffay, clear-minded and vigorous physically, believes that the white man will some day try to re-enslave the Bush Negroes and that there will be another war between them. "Bahkra greedy," said he.

The small Paramacca tribe does much less in the way of

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Introduction

114 After having left the plantation life in the colony of Surinam,
121 I went back there in the beginning of 1851 with the plan, as the
[101] result of an agreement reached by me with a Belgian firm, to send shiploads of wood to the motherland and Belgium.

[123] I undertook my journeys to the Bush Negroes for this purpose and visited most of their dwelling places, something that entailed effort and great cost, since I distributed ample presents everywhere for the purpose of thereby acquiring their confidence, which they do not readily grant to Whites.

123 At my very first encounter I took the precaution of politely
[576] greeting each one of them without distinction and shaking their
[177] hands, a practice taken over by them from the Whites in the most recent times, which assures them of a feeling of good-will such as they experience among themselves but never from a White.

[352] I spoke to them frankly and in a friendly way, sat next to them in their huts on their low stools, and partook of their meals. In short -- I lived for a while without reserve or fear among them, paying amply for everything that I enjoyed in this way or that.

[273] I also permitted them, whenever they wanted to use any of my store of beverages, such as wine, beer, brandy, and gin, to ask me for it quietly, so that I would be able to order my servants to offer them what they had requested. In addition I supplied /2/ them amply with dram (1), herbs, and lead and, in order to show

1. A kind of inland rum (sugar spirits).

generosity to the women as well, frequently gave them and the children biscuits, cake, or some coins.

[121] In the beginning they were very reserved and mistrustful, but gradually, and after some difficult years, became more open with me, so that I, adapting myself entirely to their practices, was able to carry out my plan to have the necessary wood processed by them.

/6 cont./

175 pacified Bush Negroes. From then on they received from the
648 Netherlands Government annual presents consisting of guns, herbs, lead, tobacco, rice, salt, dram, and so forth.

648 In later times, however, these were gradually decreased
829 by the government and finally completely abolished, as a result of which the Negroes no longer so willingly and without remuneration want to be of service to the government; since they believe that with the conclusion of the peace they came to an agreement with the government that on their part the Whites would no longer be hindered in anything, while they would endeavor to assist the government whenever that should be necessary, in return for which the presents mentioned above would be handed out to them annually on the part of the government. At present they complain about their treatment by the government and refuse to believe that they can and may trust the Whites.

101 The Bush Negroes are divided into four tribes: /7/
103 1st. Aucaners, who have their dwelling place, Auca, on the
133 river Marowyne; and they have their working places on the river above Cottica, where they come from the Marowyne by way of the Wanakreek. Among themselves they are called Joeka /Djuka/ and by the Whites, Aucaners, after the plantation Auca, where on 19 October 1760 peace was concluded with them.

2nd. Saramaccaners, who live on the river above Surinam, principally near the waterfall Arasoebanja near Gjengjen and Prakieki, and have their working places along the same river and in the cove /kreek," creek, cove"/ Taaiboto Kouloegrou and Kassipora. They are called Saramaccaners by the Whites, after the river of that name (where they formerly lived), and among themselves Wousie or Moejére.

3rd. Mantoewari, who have their dwelling place on the river above Saramacca and their working places along the same river on Maripaston and in the cove Mindrinetie. They are names like the Saramaccaners, since they, too, although separate, live on the same river.

/7 cont./

101 [175] [567] 4th. Bonnie /Boni/ Negroes, living on the river above Marowyne; until 1862 they were in a state of slavery among the Aucaners, but at that time, through the intervention of the government, they were released from it. Their name is supposed to be derived from a former runaway slave who had placed himself at their head.

Chapter III

Government, Laws, Administration of Justice

643 [292] Each of these tribes, except for the Bonnie Negroes, has a chief whom they call granman (governor); the uniform given to him by the government is a blue tunic with epaulets and a cocked hat with white plush.

Among the Aucaners the chief is called Byman, a cunning, courageous, and prudent man, around 63 years old.

The chief of the Saramaccaners is called Abram, an infirm old man who is very weak of character and has little influence.

The Mantoewari Negroes have a chief called Kalkoen, who, although aged and infirm, can nonetheless still be called firm of character.

631 /8/ Under their chief they have a certain number of captains and council members. The former are divided into bush captains, who take command in case of war, and into house or land cap- [554] tains, who deal with internal matters with the chief. The token of their prestige given to them by the government consists of a large staff with a round silver ball (drum-major's stick), on which is the Netherlands coat of arms with "Je maintiendrai."

344 They have a large open shed which serves them as court and which they call kroetoehoso (probably derived from the English "courthouse").

682 Their legislation is very limited. One who kills another is punished with death; one who poisons someone suffers death by torture, provided that substantial irrefutable proof exists. (See Chapter XI below.) If the death penalty is not appropriate, the

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Agriculture among the Bush Negroes of the Marowijne /Maroni/

by D. C. Geijskes (1)

1. Government biologist with the Department of Internal Affairs, Paramaribo.

1. Introduction

When one goes to the small communities of the inhabitants of the bush who live in the interior districts of Surinam, one quickly sees, upon examination, the basis on which the maintenance of such communities rests. The struggle for existence among primitive peoples covers the food supply and the resistance that can be offered against illness and pests. These two factors ultimately determine the birth surplus, which as a result expresses the possibility for survival.

Among the Bush Negroes we see in the course of the years an increase in the population, an advance, therefore, in spite of the obstructions of nature. But this advance creates new problems. It was during the Medical-Scientific Expedition to the Southern Border of Surinam, held from February to July, 1952, that, in conjunction with the medical investigation in the gathering of data about the "housekeeping" of the Bush Negroes of the Marowijne /Maroni/ and the Tapanahoni, we were struck above all by the problem of the food supply and the food itself. There is little sense in paying attention only to medical care unless at the same time attempts are made to improve the food.

An important part of the food supply is produced by agriculture. This supplies the Bush Negroes with the most, but not the best food. Next to it a number of forest products serve to provide for the need for food fats, while hunting and fishing must provide the protein.

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121 The agriculture of the Bush Negroes, however, has become
[241] a matter which urgently demands the attention of the administration as a result of the wasteful use of land. Until now little attention has been paid to this, but if one wants to develop the interior of Surinam, this problem will also have to be looked into.

101 The data provided here throw light upon the agriculture of
121 the Paramaccaners and the Aucaners on the Marowijne and the
[103] Tapanahoni. They were gathered during the above-mentioned medical expedition and during a trip to the Tapanahoni in October, 1952. The facts thus refer primarily to the Marowijne, but in general they are certainly also valid for the other rivers along
121 which the Bush Negroes live. It is a typically Surinam problem,
648 connected with the circumstance that the Bush Negroes have worked in the deep interior in the same fashion for hundreds of years, independent of the life in the civilized coastal region and almost completely outside the sphere of interest of the government.

2. The Grounds System

241 For the planting of agricultural crops the Bush Negro lays out little so-called food grounds. One is to understand by this
[311] cleared pieces of ground in the virgin forest on which the crops are cultivated. The grounds lie along the rivers on higher flat lands, mostly terraces that are not submerged during high water or, in the absence of such terrain, on the slopes of hills. They are more or less circular and have a surface area of a half to one and a half hectares.

241 During the long dry season (October, November) the men
221 clear the grounds. Two to three weeks thereafter the forest that
132 has been felled is burned; the smaller branches are cleared away,
462 but the trunks are left lying. The ground is not worked. As soon as the rains of the short rainy season begin, they start to plant and sow. This planting time falls in December and January. The wives of the Bush Negroes (for only the women do the further work) now plant all kinds of crops at the same time on one and the same ground.

000/141 cont./
241 of this predatory cultivation has been reached. The nearby
423 agricultural lands are kept in use with too brief a rest period, with
[134] the result that the soil is overworked and the periodic recovery
[825] of the forest proceeds at an ever slower pace. In addition one struggles to an increasing degree with the problem /142/ of the leaf-cutting ants, which keep the easily accessible places occupied.

241 The consequence of this circumstance is that the Bush Negroes
311 are forced to make the grounds farther and farther from their vil-
[484] lages. One travels for hours up or down the river in order to
[482] reach good land. When one cannot make good use of a forest creek in order to transport the produce from the field, one is forced to carry the harvest for one or two hours through the forest to the river. The Bush Negro does not go farther than a two hours' walk (about six kilometers from the river) (see the map /see p. 13 /).

241 On the Tapanahoni one spends even days in traveling to less
311 populated areas in order to plant and to harvest. One then estab-
361 lishes so-called work camps along the river, from which one
[103] operates in the surrounding areas. This is the case, among others, between Godoholo and Granbori for people from Drietabbetje or
311 other centers. That one does not go even farther up river, all the
423 way past the last village, Granbori, has to do with a prohibition
643 by the granman of the Aucaners. That is, the latter wants to reserve the lands lying beyond this point as hunting lands and therefore will not make them available for agricultural purposes.

241 The inhabitants of the villages along the lower Tapanahoni,
311 such as Sajé, Clementi, and Malobbi, frequently lay out their food
423 grounds in the Lawa, where they can have at their disposal agri-
361 cultural lands as far as the Aboenasoengoe Falls. Farther upstream
103 on this river the Bonni or Aloekoe Negroes assert their rights.

5. Differences between Aucaners and Paramaccaners

101 The conditions given above apply in the main to the Aucaner
162 Bush Negroes of the Tapanahoni. They number today approximately
[311] 6,500 persons. The Paramaccaner Bush Negroes of the Marowijne, approximately 1,700 in number, are in somewhat more favorable

/142 cont./
101 162 311 circumstances because with their lower population density they are less seriously in need of land. But the same fate awaits them in the near future. In addition, the cutting of the forest has more serious consequences in this region because as a result exploitable timber is lost. Along the Tapanahoni, above the greater falls, woodcutting is impossible for the time being, so that the loss of wood in these districts does not as yet play an economic role here.

6. Measures toward Improvement

433 The question now is whether the grounds-operations of the Bush Negroes must be regulated by a higher authority. My advice is: The /143/ sooner improvement can be brought about in this, the better, and for the following reasons.

[311] 1st. Because of the grounds-system practiced from olden times, the Aucaners of the Tapanahoni in particular now have such a land shortage that further growth of the population is thereby hindered.

[262] 2nd. The food supply of this Bush Negro society is precarious and one-sided; this threatens to become more and more unfavorable, with the consequence that the health situation will require more and more care.

3rd. The Bush Negroes cannot be considered capable of bringing about changes for the better in these agricultural methods by themselves.

[167] 4th. Occupying these districts becomes less and less attractive for the younger generation, whereby a spreading of the [464] population over other areas takes place. The men try to find work in the lowlands or in the concerns in French Guiana.

5th. Through the wasteful use of land the supplies of wood along the rivers are in danger of becoming lost entirely.

6th. It is to be feared that unless help is offered through government channels in time to help this bush population out of the impasse, its social and economic retrogression will soon become seriously felt.

4: Geijskes--13 G, N-5 (1952) 1954 SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

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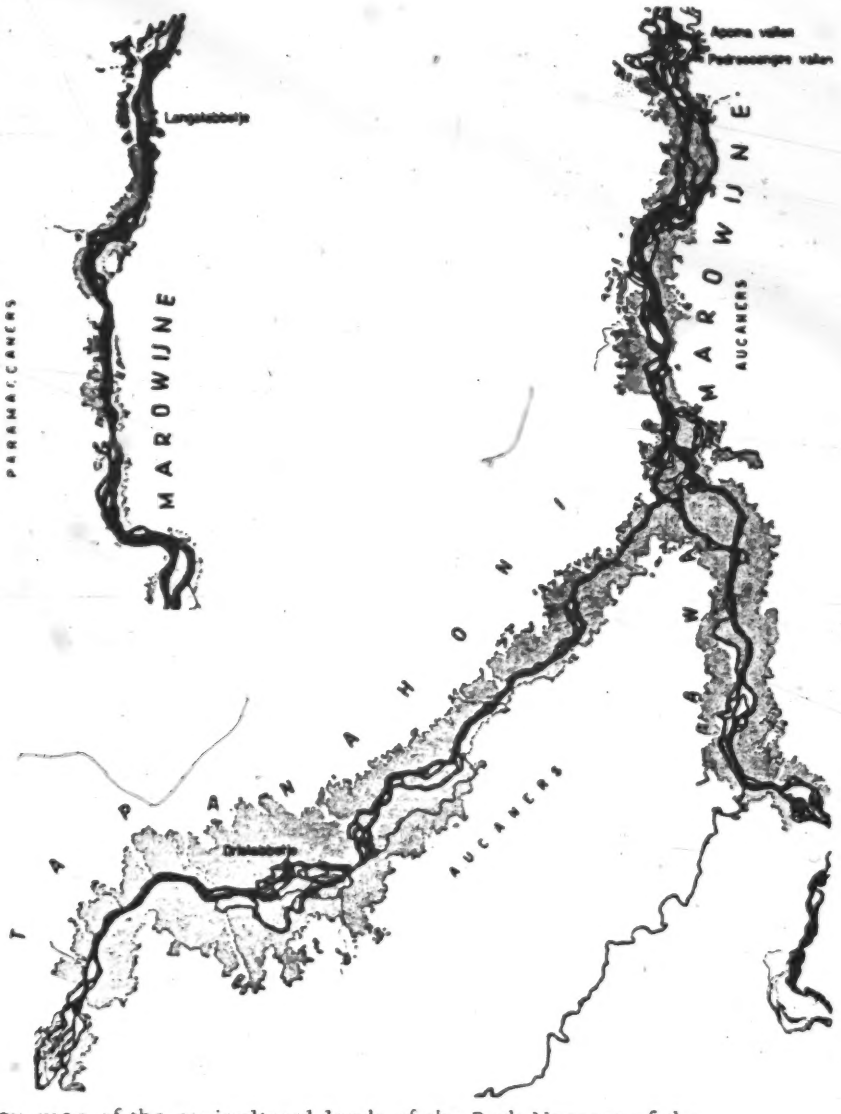

Survey map of the agricultural lands of the Bush Negroes of the Marowijne /Maroni/. Made from aerial photographs by the Central Bureau Luchtkaartering Paramaribo /Central Bureau for Aerial Surveying, Paramaribo/. Taken in 1947.

5: Hurault--1 K,E-5 (1948-1959) 1959 SR8 Bush Negroes SR8 ●
Rucuyen SR12

Introduction

During the expeditions of the Institut géographique national in French Guiana in 1948 and 1949, we lived in close contact with the Boni Refugee Blacks and the Oayana /Oyana/ Indians of the Upper Maroni. These populations present the remarkable peculiarity of belonging to two entirely distinct ethnic groups while living side by side, leading in general the same way of life, and having the same diet. Historical circumstances have thus joined together in the Upper Maroni the conditions of a rigorous biological experiment which, so far as we know, do not exist so distinctly in the other regions. In fact, wherever two different ethnic groups coexist, they usually do not have either the same habitat or the same way of life; for example, on the coast of Surinam the Indonesians live mostly on the rice plantations and the Blacks in the towns, under quite different conditions of habitat, diet, and hygiene; under these conditions, the differences observed on the level of pathology and demography are difficult to interpret.

Doctor André Sausse, who accompanied us, studied the Boni and the Oayana Indians on the medical level; he submitted evidence that these two populations presented a distinct pathology having profound repercussions on their demographic situation (1). During this period we lacked the time to substantiate these data by a census and by a systematic interrogation of the women. We were able to carry out this work at the close of the expedition for the delimitation of the southern frontier in January, 1957. The data collected have been verified and completed in the course of two other expeditions made for the Office de la recherche scientifique dans les territoires d'Outre-Mer /Bureau of Scientific Research in the Overseas Territories/ (October 1957 – February 1958 and

1. Dr. André Sausse, Populations primitives du Maroni /Primitive populations of the Maroni/, Larose, Paris, 1951.

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R /509 cont./
● 101 October 1958 – January 1959), expeditions whose principal aim
114 was the sociological study of these populations.
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Social Structure and Way of Life

B
101 The Boni Refugee Blacks. The Boni are one of the above-mentioned
[175] tribes of the Refugee Blacks, reconstituted in the course of the
eighteenth century by rebel African slaves who escaped from
B Surinam plantations (Dutch Guiana).
[131] These tribes (Saramaka, Djuka, Paramaka, Boni) live for the
[161] most part along the rivers of the interior of Surinam. They group
together a total of 25,000 persons.
B
161 With very rare exceptions, the Refugee Blacks are pure Africans.
[144] These populations, vigorous and well adapted to the country, have
experienced in the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries
a remarkable demographic increase, attested to by all the authors.
Descended from small rebel groups which could not have contained
more than a few hundred women, they are now estimated at more
than 25,000 persons.
B
162 The Boni of the Upper Maroni, the subject of the present study,
103 number approximately 800, of whom 660 are on the French bank
[161] (the villages of Boniville, l'Enfant Perdu, Loka, Asisi, Papaïston,
and Kormotibo) and 140 on the Surinam bank (the village of Kotika).
These villages were established long ago.
B
613 Each of them groups together a matrilineage, i.e., the
621 descendants in the uterine line of one single founding ancestress;
769 certain villages know their genealogy in its entirety back to this
ancestress, who must have lived at the end of the eighteenth
century. The members of the lineage are united by the cult of the
B ancestors, which binds them firmly to their natal village and to
[622] their land. The social system is based essentially on this cult,
[793] the chief of the village being above all the priest of the ancestors.
Strictly speaking, there is no marriage, but only an acknowl-
B
581 edged concubinage which entails neither a contract between the

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INTRODUCTION

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[122] In the course of three missions of the Institut Géographique National in 1948, 1949, and 1952, we lived in close relationship with the tribe of the Boni, who supplied us with the bearers and boat crews indispensable for travel in the country. From the first contacts, we felt a deep interest in this worthy people, made up in the 18th century of rebel slaves escaped from the plantations of Surinam.

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[121] Taking advantage of the rare moments of respite allowed us by our work, we tried to study the various aspects of their material, social, and religious life. The men who accompanied us were for the most part young men who had only a limited understanding of the tradition of their group: in addition, the geographic work compelling constant moves in the uninhabited forest, investigator and informants were more often than not prey to worry and fatigue.

[101]
[121] At the end of the mission to fix the French Guiana-Brazil boundary in January, 1957, we were able to undertake a systematic investigation based on a detailed inventory of the population of the villages.

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[122] A fifth mission made under the aegis of the Institut Français d'Amérique Tropicale (IFAT) from October, 1957 to February, 1958 permitted us to fill part of the gaps in our work. Some complementary data were collected in October-November, 1958 on the occasion of another trip devoted mainly to the study of the Indians of the Upper Maroni.

128 The present work is exclusively devoted to the social life of the Boni. The information we assembled on their material life and their art, as well as their demographic situation, will be the subject of separate publications. /blank page/

/5 cont./

133 182 This extreme fragmentation of the relief must be remembered as one of the ecological factors influencing the human peopling most directly; it renders the transport of heavy loads impracticable, the establishing of roads practically impossible. Men are led to [361] settle along the rivers, which constitute the only routes of penetration toward the interior of the country.

133 132 All the important rivers flow into an alluvial valley whose width varies from some tens of meters to a kilometer, dry during the greater part /6/ of the year, but flooded under several meters 134 241 of water during the great rains of May-June. This annual inundation makes the alluvial lands unfit for agriculture; the inhabitants of Guiana cultivate only sloping lands and even very steep slopes readily; for good drainage of the soil is indispensable for the raising of manioc whose tubers, which remain in the ground for more than a year, are threatened with rotting.

311 The cultivable zone is in fact closely limited around each village. Practically, it is limited to a strip of 1,500 to 2,000 meters along the banks of each watercourse accessible to pirogues. [482] [462] Transport of manioc tubers, carried on by the women several times a month, becomes impracticable if the distance to be covered with loads is greater than two kilometers at the maximum (1).

[101] [131] [184]

1. The Djuka, very numerous on the Tapanahoni, cultivate as far as three or four kilometers from the river; but in general, the Refugee Blacks prefer to build farming habitations at a distance of several days' by boat from their village when this gives them the possibility of farming in the neighborhood of the banks.

F 233 433 F [508] F 233 [132] [311] F [461] [464] F [433] [435] B 101 B 197 B 162 131 B 433 464

/10 cont./

Since about ten years ago Creole exploiters without any outside aid have built up a herd of several hundred head, principally with an eye to the provisioning of the mining center of Benzdorp. The existence of an airodrome and regular air connections permits envisaging the export of meat to the coast. The success of animal raising in the Upper Maroni seems to be attributable to a rainfall lower in total amount than on the coastal strip but better distributed, as well as to the nature of the soil. It is principally on the floodable alluvial strip bordering the river to a width of 500 to 600 meters that cattle find the most favorable conditions, taking refuge on the neighboring hills during the three weeks of annual inundation.

Winning pastures from the forest and defending them against the encroachment of the bush represents continual work, but it can be carried out on the Maroni far better than on the coast, thanks to the man power of the Refugee Blacks.

One cannot yet come to a conclusion on the profitableness of this animal raising. Like many other enterprises in Guiana it is handicapped by its too high cost price which prevents effective competition with imported products.

2) The populations of the Maroni, descending from rebel slaves of the 18th century, who are often called Refugee Blacks, are divided into three tribes: the Djuka, the Paramaka, and the Boni, whose customs are practically identical and whose dialects are very close. These dialects are variations of Taki-taki, vehicular language derived mainly from English, whose use was widespread in the time of slavery and which has become the national language of Surinam.

The Paramaka, 700 to 800 in number, occupy the lower part of the course of the Maroni from the first waterfall (Hermina) to the junction with Béiman Creek. They are not navigators but farmers and foresters, who furnish highly prized man power for the enterprises of the Saint-Laurent region.

6:Hurault--121 K-5 (1948-1958)1961 SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Boni
French Guiana SR3
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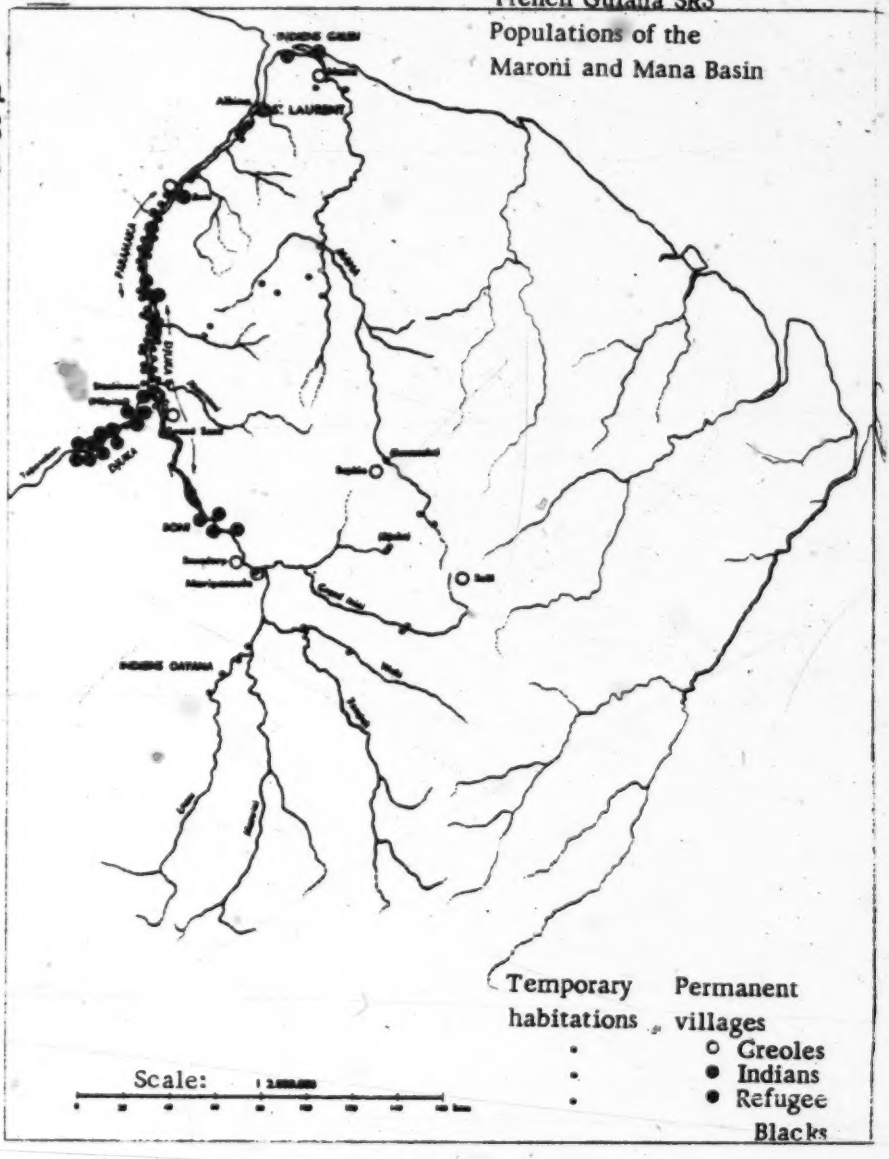

Fig. 2

/17 cont./

162 —On the Lawa a group of a little less than 680 persons is
103 settled on the French bank (villages of Agodé (Boniville), Asisi,
361 Loka, Tabiki (l'Enfant Perdu), Lapé (La Paix), and Papaïston).

—In proximity to this grouping subsists under Dutch control the village of Kotika (Cottica), grouping about 150 persons.

—In the region of Abounasounga two small groupings live in symbiosis with the Djuka. Finally, in the lower course of the Maroni exist three villages: Apatu, Ma Imma, and Wétiti. The whole represents about 150 persons.

361 These villages are stable: Kotika, Lapé, Asisi, Kormotibo
182 were already in existence at the beginning of the 19th century
[175] and their names figure in the report of the Franco-Dutch border mission of 1861; by contrast, farming habitations are moved according to the necessities of agriculture and fishing; thanks to this organization, a relatively numerous grouping can, in the interior of Guiana, in spite of conditions imposed by the geographical environment, conserve complete stability and a firm attachment
[171] to the ground. It is useful to compare this organization with the basic instability of the Indians of Guiana, for it shows very well that this instability is ascribable to psychological and sociological factors and not at all to the geographic environment.

• 101 The Boni designate themselves by the term Aluku nēnge. The meaning of this word is forgotten. It is possible that Aluku was the name of an ancient chief, or of the founding ancestress
[613] of a lineage. On this subject it is to be noted that the name of the most ancient ancestress known of the Dju lineage, who can be thought of as living at the end of the 18th century, was called
[175] Aluku. This name has been used since the origin of the tribe;
[103] indeed one reads in the interrogation of the woman prisoner conducted in 1847 by the French at Oyapok that her village was called Loukou (1).

/17 cont./

101 103 175 113 1. Archives du Ministère de la France d'Outre-Mer, Guyane /Archives of the Ministry of Overseas France, Guiana/, A3-02.

611 /18/ Villages and Kin Groups

Among all the kinship systems which existed in the African tribes from which they issued, the Refugee Blacks came back unanimously, and from the beginning, to matrilineal filiation.

571 613 643 Their social system is symbiosis, under the authority of the grand man, of a certain number of localized matrilineal kin groups.

613 Matrilineal kin groups of the Boni. With the Boni the basic grouping is the lineage, in the rigorous sense of the term, understanding by that all descendants in maternal line from a single ancestress.

To designate the kin groups the Boni employ almost interchangeably the words lo (troop, band) and bɛɛ, womb. In fact these expressions correspond to two variant interpretations of the same notion:

614 bɛɛ: matrilineage in the widest sense, understanding by that all persons knowing that they are issue of the same ancestress, even if the genealogical ties are forgotten, and even if these persons are scattered in several villages under different authorities;

lo: lineage fraction grouped in one village and constituting a distinct social unit.

The lineage bears a name whose origin is forgotten by present-day Boni; some of these names allude to a plantation or to a slave-owner, for example Lapé (La Paix: a plantation of the Cottica River); as for others, the name of the founding ancestress may be involved. Example: Kawina (name of the lineage constituting the village of Papaïston).

614
613 /26 cont./
[62] This village had no future. its complement did nothing but
[591] melt away for half a century, especially under the influence of
[177] venereal diseases.
[164]

Neither time nor geographical separation have brought on scission on the religious or legal planes. In this respect the members of Dipélu I and Dipélu II continue to think of one another as
[784] the same lineage. They remain subject to the same kunu.

613 The law of exogamy continues to be applied rigorously with-
614 in Dipélu I and within Dipélu II, but marriages are permitted be-
582 tween Dipélu I and II. There are no longer any social sanctions about this, and the common origin of the two groups is so remote that they scarcely think any more of applying to them the term
[784] pikadu. But such unions remain exceptional, the people concerned continuing to fear a superhuman sanction.

[621] No element of heterogeneous origin, fragment paternally related or refugee outsiders, has settled among the Dipélu.

613 The Papaïston or Kawina lineage (Papaïston village) has
[621] remained perfectly coherent and well grouped. Its members know their genealogy as far back as an ancestress named Térésa, who must have lived at the beginning of the 18th century. But there exists a small fraction, nearly extinct, which we shall designate as Papaïston 2, which presents a separate genealogy going almost
[614] as far back in time. Nobody knows the origin of this group exactly; it is regarded as connected by kinship ties to the main group, but the members of the two groups consider that they form two distinct
[784] bec. They do not have the same kunu.
[582] Marriage is not tolerated within the principal group, but it is allowed between members of the two groups.

613 Moreover, with the Papaïston lives a small group which
62 fled from Surinam about the end of the 19th century, originally
[167] of the Bakabuchi tribe. This group has no kinship tie at all with
[101] the Papaïston but has placed itself under the authority of the head

/27 cont./

614 The Aw.B.2, on whom we could not get sure information
[123] because this very closed group did not cooperate willingly with the inquiry, appear to be in a very similar situation, with the difference that their genealogy goes back much farther in time and they no longer remember the origin of this fraction nor the
[984] circumstances which tied its fate to that of the Aw.B.1. This group apparently has a separate kunu.

613 The Awara Bakka lineage is in a special situation from the
614 point of view of exogamy, for not only are there marriages be-
582 tween one fraction and another, but there are two within the same
[183] fraction and between relatively near relatives. Thus this group, without openly rejecting the law of exogamy, does not attach the same importance to it as do the others.

613 The Afi lineage. This lineage was founded by Afi, wife of
[101] a man from Papaïston, who came to live with him. Like the Toïna lineage, she had come from the small tribe called Bakabuchi which lived in Surinam. However, the Afi and Toïna lineages are not of the same matrilineal origin and the present members of each of the two small groups have no common worship. All of
[571] them have lost every tie with their original tribe, and their social life is entirely dependent on that of the Boni group which has taken them in.

[621] Afi settled near Kormotibo. This site is abandoned by her descendants who live, most of them, in Asisi, the rest in Kormotibo.

[619] The lineage has lost every tie with its group of origin. Nevertheless, it is assumed that if one of them wanted to go back there, on proving his relationship, he would take up all his rights again and could demand a site for making his clearings.

613 /28/ The process of assimilation which took place for the
621 AW.B.3 did not come into play for Afi's descendants with respect
571 to the Papaïston lineage. They are regarded as a separate family group, insufficient in number to constitute a social unit and whose members are placed under the authority of the heads of the villages

/43 cont./

114 of the true foundresses and the circumstances of the formation of
613 the lineages (invaluable information which must still have been present in the memory of the old men at the end of the last century) are lost forever.

128 In order to simplify the drawing up of the genealogical
601 tables, we have eliminated individuals deceased before adult age.

128 Names. To insure the necessary anonymity to our informants
551 without diminishing the accuracy of the statement, we have
601 changed a large part of the names. The fictitious names under
162 which individuals are designated in the genealogical tables as
[101] well as in the inventory of the population were mostly taken from the Djuka, who belong to the same cultural and linguistic group; in other cases, in order "to figure" the census we used a more complex process consisting in exchanging the names of two persons. Children younger than 15 are designated simply by an initial (1).

[648] 1. It is particularly disagreeable to the Refugee Blacks to have their children's names known by Europeans, with the exception of
[123] the doctor. All systematic questioning on this subject runs into clear hostility.

114 Despite these precautions, we recommend that travelers
609 provided with this work make no allusion in front of the Boni to the facts related in it; the Refugee Blacks are very proud and cannot allow an outsider to penetrate forthwith into their family privacy. That would provoke lively hostility toward the indiscreet person and would hinder later work.

114 The table of correspondence between true and fictitious
128 names is held at the disposal of sociologists who may wish to conduct studies on the Boni.

/83 cont./

621
613 --The Dikan lo, lineage of the grand man, nearly extinct
--A fragment of the Kotika lo
--A fragment of the Dju lo
--A fragment of the Lapé lo
--A fragment of the Papaïston lo
--A fragment of the Dipélu I lo

621
613
423
241 The Dikan lineage holds the real rights over the whole of the lands situated on the eastern bank of the Lawa, from Puu Mofu Creek to the south up to the edge of L'Enfant Perdu village to the north.

The fragment of the Papaïston lo established in Boniville is in a special situation; it has for a long time possessed the lands situated to the south of Puu Mofu Creek up to the edge of Loka village (Lapé lo). This group has remained strongly organized and its members do not make clearings outside their zone, in which they have all the space desirable anyway.

[643] The members of the other groups make their clearings on all the surface formerly occupied by the Dikan lo. The grand man has reserved for his personal use the lands situated near Likanaon Creek, where he has built a farming habitation. The inhabitants of Boniville make their clearings on all the rest and without any definite territorial grouping.

[101] This finage (1), like the others studied in the present chapter, was

1. Finage: zone cultivated by the members of a collectivity.

visited in January, 1957, in other words shortly after the end of the land-clearing and at the beginning of the planting.

Study of some clearings of the Agodé bakka locality "behind Boniville":

abbreviations: (K) Kotika (D) Dikan (Dip) Dipélu
(Dju) Dju (P) Papaïston (L) Lapé